

The Church of the Laodiceans

"The state of the Church represented by the foolish virgins, is also spoken of as the Laodicean state." E.G. White, *Review and Herald*, 8/19/1890.

"The church is in the Laodicean state. The presence of God is not in her midst." E.G. White, *Notebook Leaflets*, p. 99, 1898.

"To the end of time, the presence of the Spirit is to abide with the true church." E.G. White, *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 55.

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Laodicea A Tale of Two Rulers

Who will rule Jesus Christ or Antichrist?

An in-depth study of
Revelation 3:14 - 22



Ptolemy Philadelphus

verses



Antiochus Theos

By
Raymond L. Shockley
1419 White St. - Key West, FL 33040

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TEXT - (Rev 3:14-22 KJV) And unto the angel of the **church of the Laodiceans** write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; {15} I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. {16} So then because **thou art lukewarm**, and neither cold nor hot, **I will spue thee out of my mouth**. {17} Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor,

and blind, and naked: {18} I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. {19} As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. {20} Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. {21} To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. {22} He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

Intro. This is the last of the Seven Churches of Asia. The Seven Churches form a unit, they represent the entire church age. There is a special message for each of the Seven Churches contained in chapter 2 & 3 of the book of Revelation. These messages are prophetic, they show us the whole history of the Church in advance. God who knows the future picked these churches to be representatives of seven distinct church ages. The secular historians divide church history very closely to the divisions we see in the Seven Churches.

Nothing in the Bible is ever an accident. The "all knowing God" places it there for a purpose. It is there to reveal truth. It is there to reveal Jesus. It is often there to show the believer how he must live. It is often there as a warning. God is trying to keep us from being deceived by Satan. This was especially true of these seven churches. The names of their home towns are important. The history of each town is very important. The character of the people who live in these towns reflect on the character of the people who make up each age. Nothing is left to chance, each little piece of evidence is meant to open

our eyes and cause us to "hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

This last church represents the last church age. It will be the major movement in Christianity just before the Rapture of the Church. It will not be the only church around, at least five of the others are still around. Ephesus, because of a lost love, had it's candle stick plucked up. The Smyrna age ended when Emperor Constantine lifted the persecutions off the church, but through the ages there have been many who have suffered as the Smyrna members and have been comforted by its message. The Pergamos church represented the Greek Orthodox. It was followed by Thyatira which was the Roman Catholic age. Sardis was to follow. This was the church of the Reformation. Then there is the Church of Philadelphia, this was the holiness church that dearly loved the Lord Jesus Christ. It was the missionary church that kept the Word of God, especially the part concerning the Rapture of the Church. Jesus promised to keep that church from the Tribulation. This message ends with a warning not to let any man take their crown from them. Now we come to the last of the Seven, Laodicea. This church in my opinion is represented by the Charismatic movement, which has within it's ranks the "Faith Movement", the "Prosperity Movement", the "Third Wave" and such like. As we look at the evidence found in the name, the history, the message of the church and city of the Laodiceans, everything will come into focus.

I. The background of the city of Laodicea.

A. Laodicea was founded in circa 260 B.C. by Antiochus II. He named the city for his wife, Laodice, whom he later divorced. The Romans took control of the city in 129 B.C. and made it a "free city." In time it became a large and prosperous city known for its famous hot springs health

resort, a medical center that produced a well-known Phrygian eye salve which was in great demand, and a prosperous wool industry known for its black wool.

1. Notice Rome takes control of Laodicea.

2. The church age will find itself controlled and filled with Roman Catholic doctrine.

B. Laodicea was a popular place for wealthy people to retire, making the city a famous banking center. The wealth of the city caused her to be proud and self-sufficient. Unfortunately, the material prosperity of the citizens produced a very materialistic church.

1. This church could only exist in a wealthy city.

2. This movement must have a wealthy area to thrive in and that is what the United States has provided.

C. Laodicea was populated with Jews and Syrians whom Antiochus II had moved from Babylon. It was a city made up of people moved from one place to another.

1. We will see a parallel in the Church; it was also populated with people moved from one place to another.

2. The church age it represents is made up of people moving from one place to another. They were Baptist, they were Methodist, they were Pentecostal - Holiness but now they are a part of the "Great End Time Renewal".

3. Many of the members of Philadelphia have been moved from one place to another. The difference is, it was Jesus that moved people to the Philadelphia church and it was the Antichrist that moved people to Laodicea. As we will learn later, Antiochus means Antichrist.

II. Hidden messages in the name of Laodicea.

A. How and where the church gets its name is most enlightening. The city where this church is found gets its name from Antiochus II (Antiochus Theos), who built it. He names it after his wife. She is a woman whom history reveals belongs in the company of women like Jezebel of Old Testament fame and the Jezebel of the Thyatira church and Mystery Babylon of Revelation Seventeen.

Her name in Greek, Laodikeia comes from two words - Lao=people and decia, dee'-kay; right (as self-evident), i.e., justice (the principle, a decision, or its execution)--judgment, punish, vengeance - decia = justice. So Laodicea means = "justice for the people" or a people who will suffer the vengeance and punishment of God.

B. Loadice's husband was named Antiochus Theos. His name is also revealing. Antiochus meant "against" or "instead of." Theos is the Greek word for God. So together the name means "instead of" "God" or "Antichrist." Loadice was married to Antichrist.

Note -The Laodicean church ends up married to Antichrist.

C. Antiochus assumed the name "Theos" after stealing some of Ptolemy "Philadelphus" people (This is the man called the King of the South in the Book of Daniel or the King of Egypt). After winning these people from "Philadelphus" he thinks he is God. This has its parallel in the Laodicean church. Many of the people who make up its ranks are people and local churches stolen from "the Philadelphia Church."

D. Ptolemy Philadelphus has a lot in common with the Philadelphian Church. It was a church that had kept the Word and that was their strength.

1. The redeeming quality of Philadelphus was that he set the Jews that were in his kingdom free. He paid their masters silver to buy their freedom.

2. His father's name was Ptolemy Soter. "Soter" means a deliverer, God or Christ - Savior. That made Philadelphus a type of son of God who saves and delivers. It is from him the Antichrist steals.

3. Ptomley Philadelphus wants to have the Bible of the Jews translated into Greek, the language of the common man of that day. He requested the High Priest of Israel, Eleazar, to send an authentic copy of the Mosaic law and the men to translate it into the Greek language. Seventy-two men were sent. Their finished work was called the Septuagint version of the Bible. This version of the Old Testament rendered the scriptures intelligible to a vast number of people. The Septuagint is considered one of the greatest fruits of the Greek conquest.

When the Church started to assemble the canon of scripture, the Greek speaking churches adopted the Septuagint together with that of the Koine Greek New Testament as their scriptures. The Septuagint is still the official Bible of the Greek Orthodox Church. It is also used by biblical scholars to understand how the Old Testament may have been interpreted anciently. It is also the version of the Jewish Bible most used by the writers of the New Testament. It was the "King James Bible" of that day and remains the Bible of the East.

4. Contrast this with the church of Laodicea's attitude toward the Bible. When the Synod of Laodicea met in Laodicea they

rejected the Book of Revelation and left it out of their canon. They also lost the epistle written to them by Paul. They rejected and lost the part of the Word of God they most needed. They became blind without the Word of God. That is happening to this church age, they are told not to go to the Bible to look for these new manifestations. "God is doing a new thing," "don't judge or think." This would make one blind.

E. Back to Antiochus Theos and Loadice. Loadice had been put away by Antiochus as a condition of a treaty with Ptolemy Philadelphus. Philadelphus gave Antiochus his daughter Berenice, she was to be the true Queen and her issue was to inherit the throne. If we want peace with our Philadelphus, we must put away this Loadice we are facing.

1. Philadelphus dies and Antiochus recalls Loadice.
2. Loadice wants to gain control of the kingdom now, she was a believer in the "Dominion Now" theology. She causes Antiochus to be poisoned; when she saw he was dying, she placed in his bed a person, named Artemon, who very much resembled him, both in his features and tone of his voice.
3. Artemon, whose name means something ready, something hung up, like the mainsail of a vessel, was to act the part that Loadice had set up for him. It is wind that allows the mainsail to move the ship.
4. This mainsail is not the real Theos. He is an actor blowing on the people whatever Loadice desires. His voice sounds so much like the real "Theos," that the common people could not tell the difference.
5. You can certainly see the counterpart in today's ministries. We are told that God moves in "waves" and that this is the

"Third Wave." Now what causes waves? Winds are often the cause of great waves that toss ships around. It is easy to see what God was looking at when he placed these words in the Bible, (Eph 4:14 KJV) "That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with **every wind of doctrine**, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in **wait to deceive**";

6. The people heard the voice of Theos, but it wasn't really Theos (that is God) it was a counterfeit voice.

7. The fake voice of Theos causes the people to remove the rightful Queen and heir and replace them with the evil Loadice and her sons. Loadice did not believe she was safe as long as Berenice was alive, so she had her killed. The evil Loadice of our day is trying to kill the pure church today.

F. Never fear, God is on His throne and justice will come to the woman whose name means "judgement." Philadelphus's son now reins. He is Berenice's brother. His name is Ptolemy Evergets, his name means "Benefactor." The "Benefactor" brings his army and puts to death Loadice. The great "Benefactor" Jesus Christ is coming and will leave Laodicea to her judgement.

(These kings and this drama is recorded in Daniel the eleventh chapter.)

The Text of the Message to Laodicea.

III. The pattern of the message.

All seven of the messages follow the same pattern.

A. The message will first be directed to the "Angel" of the church.

1. The meaning of the word Angel - aggelos, ang'-el-os; from aggello (to bring tidings); a messenger; esp. an "angel"; by impl. a pastor:--angel, messenger.

2. To put it very simply each letter is directed to the pastor of that local church. He is the messenger sent by God to lead the people in the direction they should follow. God has placed the pastor in the church to be His messenger. A true pastor is to preach only God's Word to the people.

3. The "Angel" will represent the ministry of each church age. What will be true of the leader, will be true of the follower.

4. Our last pastor causes his followers to become blind. (Mat 15:13-14 KJV) But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. { 14 } Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.

B. The location of the Church is given.

1. Each of these churches is different from the other. Each has its own location.

2. Each of the church ages has its own location in Church history.

3. Each has its own location concerning its doctrine, teachings and practices.

4. You can not go to one town without leaving the other town. You simply can not be in two places at one time. You can not be in two churches at one time.

5. You cannot be in Philadelphia and Laodicea at the same time. You have to move from one to the other. The same is true of the church ages.

6. The location of each church will reveal a vast amount of information about the church itself.

C. In each message Jesus will use a **personal reference to Himself**.

1. Each message will be personalized to deal with the relationship that Jesus has with that church and what it is teaching.

2. A wealth of information is to be found here. It often reveals how Jesus feels about what is going on in that church. An example of this is what He says to the pastor of the Thyatira church, "These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass;" He is clearly angry with this church and plans to bring it into judgement.

3. What does Jesus think of this final church, Laodicea? As we will see later in the message, there is something very nauseating about this church. Jesus will tell them He feels like vomiting.

4. Close examination of this last personal reference will find that Jesus personally refutes Laodicea's entire system of teachings.

D. The message itself begins with the "**Commendation**".

1. Whatever is positive and worthy about each in the sight of God receives approval from Jesus Christ.

2. He starts each message by saying, "I know thy works,". God examines every detail concerning each church. Rev. 2:23 ". . . all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works."

3. All of the churches but Laodicea have something which Jesus can compliment. There is no compliment for the last Church. There is nothing good about this church. This should be warning enough not to be a part of her.

E. The message will then proceed to the "Rebuke or Reproof".

1. Only two of the seven churches escape without rebuke, Smyrna and Philadelphia.

2. Smyrna was willing to die for the Lord. They were faithful beyond question and their whole message was one that encouraged them.

3. Philadelphia did every thing the Bible told them to do. They loved the Lord Jesus Christ and were looking for the Rapture. They were told not to change what they had.

4. The rebuke to Laodicea is a repudiation to all that they are, all that they represent.

5. Look at the words used in their rebuke, "knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:"

a. We are about to look at people who are wretched.

b. We are about to look at people who are miserable.

c. Imagine a pastor and church in a rich city that are poor, blind and naked.

d. This is the last "End Time Church". They are bragging about how they are in the middle of a great move of God. They are too blind to see that they are moving away from God.

F. Jesus gives "Counsel". This is the sermon that each pastor should be preaching to his church.

G. Promise to the "Overcomers" Every church, church member and pastor will have something to overcome to get to Heaven.

1. The Devil was wanting to control God's church.
2. He tempts every church and pastor with the same temptations he tempted Jesus with.
3. If Laodicea is to make it she had better take God's counsel serious.

H. All of the messages close with this instruction "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

1. You must have a very sensitive ear.
2. Turn down the music and hear the still small voice.

He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

IV. (Rev 3:14 KJV) And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write;

A. And unto the Angel of the church.

1. As it has already been stated in the outline, Angel here is in reference to the pastor of the church. It also would represent the overall ministry of the last church age.
2. This is a rejected church. The Lord warns He is about to vomit them and the message ends with Jesus standing on the outside of this church knocking on the door. It is this pastor

that causes this deplorable condition. This type of minister is revealed by other prophetic verses.

3. Notice the following passage, it is a warning of a false ministry. It may be a warning to those who are already in the Philadelphia Church (a straight & narrow way - this is a holiness church) not to leave and go to the Laodicean Church (this is the broad way and the broad gate church).

Philadelphia is known for its holiness and Laodicea is known for its black sheep. This is also a warning to anyone deciding to pick a church or pastor. Better find the straight and narrow way if you want life eternal.

(Mat 7:13-27 KJV) Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: { 14 } Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

a. The way is straight that leads to life. The straight way must stay inside of the boundaries of the Bible.

b. "Anything goes" teaching and living is the broad way that leads to destruction.

{ 15 } Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

a. When Jesus warns us to watch out for false prophets, He is really telling us that they are coming. That we will be faced with them.

b. They will rise up among the herd, they will look like sheep outwardly.

c. Jesus is telling us to look "under the wool", don't just take it for granted that everyone who says they are sent by God is from God.

d. These guys are inwardly ravaging wolves. What do ravaging wolves do? They devour flesh. False prophets devour money and power. They need people to devour.

{16} Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? {17} Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. {18} A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

a. Jesus said we would know the wolves by their fruit. Do you see an insatiable desire for money? You may be looking at a devouring wolf.

b. Today all kinds of tricks are being used to trick people out of their money. One of the most outrageous tricks took place on the TBN Christian network. A certain minister said that God dropped into his spirit "a special word." If all the viewers would send in \$2000.00, no matter how they got it, they were to send it in. They would have all the debts that they wrote down on a piece of paper canceled by God. Now who do you think wolves eat the most? The sick and weak. That is just the kind of people the wolves are taking advantage of here. These are good people weak under the stressful load of financial hardship, and this wolf is trying to finish them off.

Here is a passage that so reminds me of what is happening today -(Ezek 22:23-28 KJV) And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, {24} Son of man, say unto her, . . . {25} **There is a conspiracy of her prophets** in the midst thereof, like a roaring lion ravaging the prey; they have devoured souls; **they have taken the treasure and precious**

things; they have made her many widows in the midst thereof. {26} Her priests have violated my law, and **have profaned mine holy things: they have put no difference between the holy and profane, neither have they showed difference between the unclean and the clean,** and have hid their eyes from my sabbaths, and I am profaned among them. {27} Her princes in the midst thereof **are like wolves ravening the prey,** to shed blood, and to destroy souls, to get dishonest gain. {28} And her prophets have daubed them with untempered mortar, seeing vanity, and divining lies unto them, saying, Thus saith the Lord GOD, when the LORD hath not spoken.

{19} Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. {20} Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

a. As Laodicea's pastor can expect to be spewed out if he doesn't repent, these false preachers can expect to be hewn down and cast into the fire.

b. These preachers tell you not to judge them and their message but Jesus demands that you judge them by the fruit you see in their lives.

{21} Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. {22} Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? {23} And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

a. The question is asked "who gets to go to Heaven?" The answer is only "they that do the will of the Father." The man of God is not to do his will but God's. He is not called to

build his own ministry. He is to let God use him to edify God's church.

b. The Rapture happens and "Many" are left behind. The word "Many" means up to 50% are left.

c. These people are completely surprised to be left behind. They had fooled themselves. (2 Tim 3:13 KJV) But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and **being deceived**.

e. Look at the reasons why they think they are ok. We prophesied in thy name, we cast out devils and best of all we did many wonderful works. Signs and wonders were done.

f. The Lord says He never knew them and they were to depart from Him.

g. He called them workers of iniquity. They had used His name, His Word, and His people to build their own kingdoms. **This is Laodicea's pastors**.

{24} Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: {25} And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. {26} And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: {27} And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

1. Jesus warns us to build on His words and we would be building on the rock.

2. Ignore his warnings, follow the fake, and the false, but then expect the storms that will tear down your house.

4. (1 Tim 4:1-2 KJV) Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; {2} Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;

a. You might wonder how the false prophets in Mat. 7: did their signs and wonders? This verse tells us how they may have done them, "seducing spirits". These are demons who want to influence the church.

b. They have departed from the faith. They stopped preaching it, they stopped teaching it and substituted "doctrines of demons".

B. "**the church of the Laodiceans**" In the last six messages we hear Jesus addressing the churches this way "to the church of Ephesus", "to the church in Smyrna", "to the church in Pergamos", "to the church in Thyatira", "to the church in Sardis" and "to the church in Philadelphia". He still considered these churches as belonging to Him, but Laodicea belonged to the Laodiceans themselves, so He addressed them this way, " the church **of the** Laodiceans".

1. They were in control, when He sent them a message they rejected it.

2. They didn't have His values, His righteousness nor His approval.

V. These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;

A. Jesus is the Amen - AMEN is a transliteration of a Hebrew word signifying something as certain, sure and valid, truthful and faithful. It is sometimes translated, "so be it."

1. The Lord describes Himself as the "amen", there is a certain finality in this. He is the end, nothing can be added or taken away from him. In the gospels, Jesus used "amen" to affirm the truth of His own statements. English translations often use "verily," "truly," "I tell you the truth" to translate Jesus' amen. He never said it at the end of a statement, but always at the beginning: "Amen, I say to you" (Matt. 5:18; 16:28; Mark 8:12; 11:23; Luke 4:24; 21:32; John 1:51; 5:19). In John's Gospel, Jesus said "Amen, amen." That Jesus prefaced His own words with "amen" is specially important, for He affirmed that the kingdom of God is bound up with His own person and emphasized the authority of what He said.

2. He is the "Amen", he will have the final word on everything

3}). He who not only says, but is, *the Truth*. The saints used . the Amen--(}, *Hebrew*, "Bless Himself in the God of *Amen* ._._. swear by the God of *Amen*," *Amen*said, "Amen, I say unto you," at the end of prayer, or in assenting to the word of God; but none, save the Son of God, ever

4. The title happily harmonizes with the address. His unchanging faithfulness as "the Amen" contrasts with Laodicea's wavering of purpose, "neither hot nor cold".

5. To sum up just what Jesus means when He says "These things saith the Amen". He is saying "I am the sovereign God and what I say goes." The Amen; " one steady and unchangeable in all his purposes and promises. This is a counter point to one of the major points of the "Faith

Movement", "The Prosperity Movement", and "Charismatic Movement" (which are merely three stripes on the same zebra).

a. Their teaching is in short, "What you say is what you get". Passage after passage is twisted to teach the Laodiceans how to use God and get what they want from Him. They are a people who want to change everything according to their will.

b. See what one of their leading teachers did to this verse, (1 John 5:14 KJV) "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us:" This television preacher informed us the Protestants had placed a comma in the wrong place. He said it should read this way, "if we ask any thing, according to his will he heareth us:"

Understand what this preacher did, he took the liberty to take a verse which taught the sovereignty of God and changed it to teach the sovereignty of man. Man is now in control of God. Tell God what ever you want, what ever you want Him to do, He has to do it. This preacher added his own meaning to the Word of God. It is to men like him that Jesus declares, "these things saith the Amen", It is not what you say, but what I say.

B. The faithful and true witness -Greek for - the faithful witness) and for \ho alêthinos\ (the genuine), "whose testimony never falls short of the truth"

1. You can depend upon every thing Jesus says. If He says it will happen, it will happen.

2. This is much different than the prophets of present day Laodicea. We are told since this is the age of grace prophets are sometimes wrong. This is simply wrong! Those who speak for God must always be truthful. There is a terrible

price for adding to God's Word. (Rev 22:18-19 KJV) For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, **If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:** {19} And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

4. (Jer 5:30-31 KJV) A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land; {31} The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?

5. (Jer 14:14-16 KJV) Then the LORD said unto me, The prophets prophesy lies in my name: I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spake unto them: they prophesy unto you a false vision and divination, and a thing of nought, and the deceit of their heart. {15} Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning the prophets that prophesy in my name, and I sent them not, yet they say, Sword and famine shall not be in this land; **By sword and famine shall those prophets be consumed.** {16} And the people to whom they prophesy shall be cast out in the streets of Jerusalem because of the famine and the sword; and they shall have none to bury them, their wives, nor their sons, nor their daughters: for I will pour their wickedness upon them.

a. This is the same fate that faces the Laodicean pastor. He is about to be spewed out. Once that happens he is in the tribulation.

C. **The beginning of the creation of God;**

1. Of whom all things that are made, have their beginning.

2. Robertson's N.T. Word Pictures said, "the originating source of creation through whom God works."

3. This is a very relative statement concerning the Laodicean Church age. If a preacher can do signs and wonders, he is automatically viewed as a voice of God. What he says has great weight. People follow him.

4. Jesus is reminding them that He is the creator. He is telling them that all legitimate power comes from Him. Jesus said, " (John 15:5 KJV) . . . for without me ye can do nothing."

5. If you will listen to a man because he claims to heal a few sick people or can cause some people to fall down, shouldn't you listen to Him who created all things. Jesus seems to be saying, " Listen to me I am your source of life".

6. "The beginning of the creation of God". Cults have mistakenly used this verse to teach that Jesus is a created being. The word beginning is the Greek word "*arche*" which means first, or chief, but in this context is better translated "ruler". "*Arche*" in the Greek language was the starting point, the source, or in this case Jesus is the ultimate source of reality. The "*arche*" is the one from whom all creation originates. In terms of power, the "*arche*" held all the cards or wielded the power. The word contains the idea of authority and preeminence. When Jesus calls himself the "*arche*", he reminds the church that he has the place of preeminence and power.

VI. THE COMMENDATION.

A. V. 15 "I know thy works,"

1. Jesus examines every church to see how well they did the work he assigned to them.

2. Jesus assigned one work to the church. He didn't call them to conquer the world and take over the government. Their job was to preach the Gospel to the world. They were to make disciples of all men by teaching them what ever He had taught them.

a. (Mat 28:19-20 KJV) Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: {20} Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

b. (Mark 16:15-16 KJV) And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. {16} He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

3. He who is all-knowing tells the pastor of the Laodiceans that he knows the truth about his works. This is fitting because this man has fooled his church people and made them blind. Jesus sees Laodicea for what it is.

a. It is always wise to see things through the eyes of Jesus Christ.

B. Normally after Jesus says, "I know thy works", he will then compliment the church for the good things He finds in that church. There is nothing that Jesus can compliment this church for. He must go straight to the "**rebuke**" part of the message.

C. A historian wrote, contrasting Philadelphia and Laodicea, both were built to be missionary centers. They were built by Greeks who felt that the gods wanted them to spread their culture and language to the world. These cities were also trading centers. Philadelphia was a great success for they

were more interested in the message than they were in the money. Laodicea, the historian said, was a great failure at being a missionary city because it was more interested in the money than the message. What an accurate comparison to the two last church ages.

1. It is easy to see Laodicea is more interested in money. Her whole message is loaded with ways you can have more money. Everyone of those ways requires you to send money to the preacher who has the secrets to financial success.

2. (2 Pet 2:1-3 KJV) But there were false prophets also among the people, even as **there shall be false teachers among you**, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. {2} And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. {3} And through covetousness shall they with feigned words **make merchandise of you**: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.

a. Merchandise is a fitting word for Laodicea. An endless stream of items with the "anointing" on it are used to cause us to send money. Prayer cloths, holy anointing oil, water from the Red Sea, little statues, debt cancellation schemes, the list is endless.

b. Often God's Word is corrupted to support the money tricks. (2 Cor 2:17 KJV) For we are not as many, **which corrupt the word of God**: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ.

c. Every time a new scheme is hatched out by Laodicea, the unsaved world hardens its heart towards the church. Every time the news exposes another fraud, it becomes harder to

persuade the lost to be saved and become a part of the truth. The "way of truth is evil spoken of".

VII. THE REBUKE.

A. 15 I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.

16 So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.

1. Laodicea had no water of its own. This was a great weakness if the city was to prosper it had to have a water source. There was no water where this city was. Water is the source of life, Laodicea has no life of its own.

2. Water here stands for doctrine, and she has no doctrine of her own.

3. Close to Laodicea was a city called Hieropolis. Hieropolis had hot natural springs that sprung up from the ground. They were considered excellent for healing and were supposed to have medicinal purposes. Another town near Laodicea was Colossae. They had cold springs, pure and cold. Laodicea had neither a hot spring nor a cold spring. Laodicea had to import their water via an aqueduct or pipeline. By the time the water arrived it was lukewarm and polluted.

4. Colossae's water was life giving and refreshing, when it was received straight from the source. Colossae had a lot in common with Philadelphia in this area. Laodicea used her aqueduct to transfer Colossae's water to her. This helped Laodicea to grow and gain wealth. As Laodicea gained in wealth, Colossae began to decline.

5. Laodicea had a "Transferable Blessing". How accurate God's Word is, 2000 years ago Jesus saw the latest religious

fad. Today we are told a great revival is upon us. One of the catch phrases is the "River is here". This is a transferred river.

6. Laodicean water was a "Transferable Blessing." The water was transferred from its source by a man-made tube six miles long. Six is the number of man, showing us that this is entirely a human effort. We are getting this doctrine courtesy of a man-made tube called cable TV. The TBN network is the source of much of the "Transferable Blessing." They transfer it right into our homes.

7. As if what Christian Television is doing wasn't bad enough, along come men claiming to be able to channel the blessing to us. When men get between us, and God, sickness always comes. Jesus warns us about these channelers, (Mat 7:21-23 KJV) "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. {22} Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? {23} And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

8. **The Transferable Blessing** - John Arnott, the senior pastor of the Toronto Airport Christian Fellowship [formerly the Toronto Airport Vineyard] claims he and others have been commissioned to give, what he calls "the Father's blessing," away. In an interview with *Faith Today* Magazine, he said: "God has told us to give the anointing away to whoever would like it, especially to pastors and elders who can bring it back to their churches. We want them to be the heroes - not us. This is not a Vineyard thing. This is God."

The anointing that Pastor John Arnott is talking about often manifests itself in the form of strange human behavior and

has no biblical precedence at all. In order to clarify further, we can quote directly from the Toronto Airport Christian Fellowship's **Home page** accessible to anyone on the Internet. The description states, "The Toronto Blessing is a transferable anointing, In its most visible form it overcomes worshipers with outbreaks of laughter, weeping, groaning, shaking, falling, drunkenness, and even behaviors that have been described as a "cross between a jungle and a farmyard."

a. Apparently you cannot get this blessing straight from God, you have to go to a **medium**. Someone who has it, has to transfer or impart it to the seeker. A type of guru now stands between the seeker and God. You will pardon me if I point out the many similarities between the 'Toronto' experience and the demonic manifestations found throughout the New Age movement and also in many pagan religions. A number of Indian gurus, such as Bagwhan Shree Rajneesh and Ramakrishna, have had the power to transfer a state of rapturous bliss to their followers merely by touching them. In the case of Ramakrishna, these states were often accompanied by uncontrollable laughter or weeping. Swami Baba Muktananda also had this power, according to a former devotee, and the resulting 'Kundalinil manifestations included uncontrollable laughing, roaring, barking, crying, shaking, etc. Some of his followers also became mute or unconscious, while many felt themselves infused with feelings of tremendous joy, peace and love.

b. Now compare that with what is happening at the Toronto Airport Vineyard church (home of the Toronto Blessing). People are behaving & making sounds like animals in the church. Arnott, on page 178 of his book the Father's Blessing claims that when pastors and church leaders have acted like lions, oxen and eagles in the church services that he has attended, this behavior had prophetic significance. There is no

biblical basis for this idea at all. The goings on at Toronto were so bad that even a man like John Wimber, along with the Vineyard Association became alarmed. After twelve months of warnings given to the Toronto Vineyard, the Toronto church was expelled from the International Vineyard Movement. You would think that Church of God leaders would be at least as discerning as the Vineyard association.

c. This is a point that we do not want to miss. This "new revival" is obtained by going to a place where the "river is flowing". You must have someone who has been "Imparted" or "Initiated into the Blessing" lay hands on you and they will **channel** that blessing to you. You cannot simply go to God for yourself, you must go to where God is moving. This is a blessing that takes you beyond the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. There is nothing in the Bible to confirm such an experience.

d. Now it becomes clear as to why Jesus gave us this command, "(Mat 24:23-26 KJV) Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. {24} For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. {25} Behold, I have told you before. {26} Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not."

e. **We are forbidden to run here or there hunting revival.**

We are to go directly to God for revival. The odds are very great that we will be deceived when we run to and fro hunting for revival. God has promised to give each one of us our own personal river if we will just go straight to Him. (John 7:37-39 KJV) In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto

me, and drink. {38} He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, **out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.** {39} (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

f. Everything about salvation is about removing the middleman from between God and man. Everything about the "new revival" is about restoring the middleman back.

B. 16 So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.

1. Laodicea had neither a hot spring or a cold spring. Laodicea had to import their water via an aqueduct or pipeline. By the time the water arrived it was lukewarm and polluted. If a person drank the water without boiling it, it would produce nausea and cause vomiting.

a. If her water had been cold it would have refreshed and given life.

b. If her water had been hot it would have healed.

c. Laodicea's water did not help the people who drank it but the people who drank it were quite often fooled to think it was the best water ever. Jesus could not be fooled, He trusted His own senses. You would do well to trust your own senses.

2. Lukewarm is the word "*emesia*" from which we get the word "emetic." Emetic means "that which produces nausea and causes one to vomit." Very literally Jesus is telling this church that their spiritual condition makes him so sick to his stomach he could vomit.

3. "**I will**"--*Greek*, "I am about to," "I am ready to": "I have it in my mind": implying graciously the possibility of the

threat not being executed, if only they repent at once. His dealings towards them will depend on theirs towards Him.

4. ". . . **spue thee out of my month**"--reject with righteous loathing, as Canaan spued out its inhabitants for their abominations. Physicians used *lukewarm* water to cause *vomiting*. *Cold* and *hot* drinks were common at feasts, but never *lukewarm*.

5. The English translation pretties up what Christ actually said. "Spit you out of my mouth" would be more literally translated "vomit." Here was a church that made the Savior so disgusted that he wanted to throw up. You cannot get much more disgusted than that.

6. Now ask yourself why you would want to swallow what makes Jesus Christ sick to His stomach.

C. If Jesus Christ spews you out, if He has rejected you, do think you are going in the Rapture? The obvious answer is no!

1. This church and pastor could comprise the group of believers in this text -

(Rev 6:9-11 KJV) {9} And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the **souls of them that were slain for the word of God**, and for the testimony which they held: {10} And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? {11} And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.

2. The parable of the Ten Virgins in Mat 25 will teach us two things. It will teach us that you can miss the Rapture, Second it will teach us that **the blessings of God are not transferable.**

(Mat 25:1-13 KJV) Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. {2} And five of them were wise, and **five were foolish.** {3} They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: {4} But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. {5} While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. {6} And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. {7} Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. {8} And the foolish said unto the wise, **Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.**

a. The foolish said transfer your blessing to us.

b. Notice the ratio it is 50% taken and 50% left.

c. It is Philadelphia taken and Laodicea left.

{9} But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.

d. The answer is, "No can do!" I cannot transfer and have enough for my self.

e. You must go directly to the source. God and God alone is the source of your blessings.

f. (Jer 2:13 KJV) For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.

g. People who think they are sources of "Transferrable Blessing" are nothing more than cracked cisterns.

{10} And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. {11} Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. {12} But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. {13} Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

h. The groom came and left, the foolish were left behind.

i. They knocked on the door and He said I don't know you.

D. 17 Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing;

1. Laodicea was one of the great commercial cities of the ancient world. Wealth and goods pumped through like blood in a heart. Three dominant characteristics of this ancient city included (1) Gold, silver, and wealth. These were accumulated and stored in Laodicea. It was a financial center like New York, gold reserves like Fort Knox. The banking establishment serviced the entire province of Asia. (2) It was also a manufacturing center for the garment industry. It was known for "designer" clothes, a rich black wool. Jet black sheep were raised in this area, and they produced very expensive wool that went into custom clothes. Their clothes were sought after throughout the Roman Empire. (3) Laodicea was also a medical center. An eye-salve was produced there that was said to heal all manner of eye diseases. Everything their city was famous for, Jesus repudiates in the church-- "you are poor, blind and naked".

2. The three things that Laodicea the city was famous for are the three planks of the Charismatic movement. The "Prosperity Movement", the rejection of the "Holiness Movement", and the "Anointing".

3. Here was a church that had figured out how to get money for itself. "I am rich and increased with goods"

4. Notice that Jesus did not lay claim to the "Prosperity Movement", He says "Because thou sayest". Their message originated with them. They said it, He didn't say it about them.

5. Jesus comes to bring them a message, but they don't want it. They feel they have found what works, what brings them wealth. They don't want God's Word in their pulpits. It would make the rich black sheep nervous.

6. This church felt it needed nothing. Not even Jesus Christ could tell them anything. Their minds were made up, it was really no use talking to them. They had gone blind to the truth.

E. and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:

1. "**knowest not**" - This church did not know their true condition. Why would this be? Understand it is the job of the Pastor to preach God's Word to His people. When that happens their eyes will be open to their true condition.

a. This letter was first directed to the Pastor of the church of the Laodiceans.

b. The Angel of Laodicea has been conjectured to be Archippus, to whom, thirty years previously, Paul had already given an admonition, to take heed to his ministry. Apparently

Paul knew he was not doing his job in the manner that was pleasing to God. Paul exhorted his readers to **tell** Archippus to **see to** (*blepe*, "look out" for dangers in) **it that** he **complete the work** (lit., "the ministry") God had given him. Whatever his problem, he was not fulfilling (completing) his work. Archippus is a good representation of the Laodicean age pastor.

c. (Col 4:15-17 KJV) Salute the brethren which are in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the church which is in his house. {16} And when this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that ye likewise read **the epistle from Laodicea**. {17} **And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it.**

d. The number one job of the Pastor of a church is to give the Word of God to his church. Whoever the pastor was, it is evident he did not do his job. For this church didn't know God's Word; the lack of God's Word made them blind. Paul had sent a letter to them, as he had sent one to Colossae. The Epistle to the Colossians has been preserved in the Bible. What happened to the Epistle to the Laodicean? It is lost, nowhere to be found. Did the church ever get to hear it? It is quite possible it was in conflict with the ministry of that pastor, so he simply wouldn't allow it to be read.

Could it be that when the Laodicean church and pastor rejected their epistle they were rejecting their part out of the book of life? (Rev 22:19 KJV) And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

e. Perhaps this is when the attitude was first adopted, "No thanks, the message we want to preach is making us rich!" So

the Epistle to the Laodiceans is rejected, the Book of Revelation, with its cutting message to the pastor of the Laodiceans is left out of the Canon of Scripture formed at the Synod of Laodicea that took place in 367 A.D. They had rejected the Word of God.

f. Christian tradition credits Epaphras of Colossae as the founder of the church at Laodicea. Philemon was also from this same general area. Archippus was thought to be Philemon's son. Thus, the churches at Laodicea and Colossae were strongly interconnected.

g. This has a counterpart in the modern Laodicean church age. Laodicea and Philadelphia are interconnected. Many of the pastors and churches that are caught up in the "Renewal", "Revival", "Third Wave", "Toronto Blessing" and the "the River" are people who's beginnings are traced back to the Pentecostal - Holiness movement.

i. It has been previously stated that when Laodicea began to prosper she did so largely at Colossae's expense. Laodicea transferred Colossae's water, her people, and her wealth. The same is happening today it is Philadelphia's water, people and experience is being stolen and polluted.

2. "**thou art wretched, and miserable**" - This was the true condition of the "End Time Church" and they were to blind to see it. Wretched because it was rejected by the Lord. They were not renewed by the "washing of the water by the Word of God".

a. This doesn't sound like anything we are hearing today. We are told we are a part of a great end time revival. Every thing is going great! Don't miss this "End Time Move of God".

b. We are told that this is Joel's revival. They continue to tell us that God must pour out His Spirit upon all flesh before the Rapture. Part of this passage is quoted out of context -

(Joel 2:28-31 KJV) And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: {29} And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit. {30} And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. {31} The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come.

They hook us in, and tell us this is what is happening today. Reading the whole book of Joel would reveal that this book is not for a "Gentile Church". It is for the nation of Israel and the Jews. The "Latter Rain" out pouring of the Holy Ghost happens in the middle of the "Seven Year Tribulation". It happens after the Antichrist has been in power for 3 ½ years. The terrible things of chapter six of the book of Revelation have taken place. After that has happened is when the nation of Israel accepts Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Then and only then will the real "Latter Rain" take place. There will be nothing greater for the Bride of Christ than the out pouring of the Holy Ghost that took place at Cornelius' house. That experience has never been withdrawn. The Baptism of the Holy Ghost is still available to those who are willing to do things God's way. He is still a Holy God that demands holiness in His people. If you must have something beyond the Baptism of the Holy Ghost you are in line to be deceived.

So the next time someone invites you to Joel's bar for a drink or invites you to join Joel's army, say, **"No thank you, I'd rather go in the Rapture!"**

b. It is not so great when the Lord calls you wretched.

3. "**Poor**" - This church is located in one of the richest cities in the world. It has by hook or crook been able to get a lot of these physical riches. Yet Jesus says they are poor. Contrast this with the church of Smyrna. They were suffering the loss of all things. They were dying under the hand of Rome, yet Jesus proclaimed them rich. Laodicea is getting all things and they are proclaimed poor. The reason Jesus said this was because of His perspective. He is in Heaven when He speaks. He knows the Smyrna believer will soon be with Him and will inherit the streets of gold. He also knows Laodicea will be spewed out, left for the Tribulation, where a bag of gold will not buy a loaf of bread. How poor they are, nothing they have will last, all will be destroyed.

a. Laodicea was a rich banking center. They sold black garments to increase their wealth. They sold the "anointing eye salve" to make money. Everything was done to get money.

b. They were into idolatry. They worshiped Gold and personal success.

4. "**and blind**" - This is odd since this is the city that was world famous for its healing eye salve. Can't you see Mrs. Laodice, with her black anointed eye salve and black stylish robes and gold earrings on, hearing the Lord call her blind, poor and naked. If you have trouble visualizing it, just tune into the leading ladies of Christian TV. Take a close look at the eyes. Those eyes belong to the people who are setting spiritual trends that are blowing on the church world of today. We are reminded of another lady who set spiritual standards for God's people. (2 Ki 9:30 KJV) "And when Jehu was come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it; and **she painted her face**, and tired her head, and looked out at a window."

1. Much is said about the "anointing" today. Laodicea had a fake anointing. Their favorite god was Aesculapius, the Greek god of medicine and the pagan counterfeit of the Messiah. He was known as "The Great Physician." In this temple was made the famous Phygian eyesalve, called collyrium, which was sold in all parts of the then-known world. This gives forceful meaning to the counsel of the Great Physician, who advised the **spiritually blind Laodiceans** to buy eyesalve of Him that they might have spiritual vision. The God of holiness of the Philadelphia church **was not** popular with them.

Their power was fake it never healed anybody, but the people believed in it and made Laodicea rich. The eye salve was placed on the eyes using spikenard oil. They anointed them with oil. It is ironic that a church that was famous for its great anointing and sight would be pronounced blind by our Lord. They made themselves blind with admonitions like **don't question, don't judge, don't think, don't reason, don't look in the Bible for this, just blindly open up and swallow.** Today we are enticed to turn off all the warning systems God has given to protect us. This is why Jesus told the Church of Laodicea to buy eye salve to anoint their eyes.

5. "**and naked:**"

a. Nakedness in the Bible is a metaphor for being guilty of unconfessed, unrepented sin; especially the sin of idolatry. The sin that the Israelites most often needed to repent of was idolatry. Again, nakedness is a metaphor for being guilty of idolatry. What is our idolatry? The idolatry that the present day Christians most need to repent of is the way in which they are conforming to the world, the opposite of what we are told to do in Romans 12:2.

b. They were blind, (self-deceived) they were naked, not clothed with the robes of righteousness. In the ancient world, nudity was a great shame. When a conquering army wanted to humiliate its foe, they stripped them naked and marched them into the city. When a criminal was sent to the cross, they were stripped naked. What a contrast--the city famous for clothes, medicine and wealth. But they were poor, blind and naked.

E. What a tragedy, this church has thrown away the Bible, they have put out their own eye sight. They have cast off the restraints of Holiness, without which no man shall see God. They no longer have a love for the truth. "(2 Th 2:10-12 KJV) . . . in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. { 11 } And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: { 12 } That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." This church and pastor are doomed for the tribulation unless they can get their sight back and repent.

VIII. THE COUNSEL - 18 I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.

A. Here are a people who's ears perked up every time they thought they could get an advantage for themselves. Signs and Wonders Conferences are packed out. Tapes with the secret of wealth and health are snapped up. Methods for bringing the "Kingdom Now" are studied and employed. It is to these people that Jesus says, **"If you are so hungry for counsel listen to me."**

B. It will be interesting to note that everything the Laodicean church of today has tossed aside, holiness of life, doctrinal correctness based on the Old fashion Bible, heavenly rewards instead of an earthly kingdom, is what the Lord will command them to return. These are the things that Jesus complemented Philadelphia for having, and commanded the pastor of that church to hold on to at all costs. (Rev 3:11 KJV) Behold, I come quickly: **hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.** If Philadelphia changes, it will not be God that causes that change.

C. **I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire**

1. In reference to gold tried in the fire, a goldsmith would heat the gold in a vessel, and scrape off the impurities from the surface of the molten metal. The gold would be pure when the goldsmith could see his reflection on the mirror-like surface of the precious metal. So it is with God's work of sanctification and purification of the Believer. In the crucible of trials, any impurities in the heart of the Christian rise to the surface. Continued heating and removal of these impurities leads to the perfect reflection of Christ, the "goldsmith", in the life of the Believer.

2. Get back true Christian values. Get a new message, stop preaching "Kingdom Now." Go back to looking for the Rapture of the Church and the city of gold, "New Jerusalem."

D. **and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear.**

1. White raiment means righteousness and holiness. Go back to holiness.

2. The next thing Jesus tells them to buy is white garments to cover their nakedness. Nakedness in the Bible is a metaphor

for being guilty of unconfessed, unrepented sin; especially the sin of idolatry. Buying the white garments means real repentance, repentance that includes renunciation of sin, not just being sorry and asking forgiveness. **It means that you must stop the sinning!**

3. Revelation 19:8 ...to her (*the Bride of Christ; the Church*) was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is *the righteousness of saints*.

4. All around Laodicea were herds of black sheep. This blackness was protected. No new life was permitted into the herd, the sheep were just moved from one part of the herd to another part. This is the way Laodicea works, by and large her growth is not from new sheep. It is from moving the black sheep from one church to another. Who has the newest "wave of the spirit" gets the crowds.

a. They are famous for black sheep. This movement has had its black sheep, Jim Baker, Tammy Fae, Jimmy Swaggert and the list goes on.

b. What causes waves? Winds have a lot to do with causing waves. Benny Hinn and others tell us that God moves in waves. He and others tell us we are in the midst of the "Third Wave". The first being the Day of Pentecost, the second being the Azusa Street revival, and the third is the present day "Renewal" as found in "Brownsville and Toronto". In light of winds being the great cause of waves look at the following verse.

c. (Eph 4:14 KJV) That we henceforth **be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind (wave) of doctrine**, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

5. We are commanded by God's Word, **"Not To Love the World."** In spite of God's Word, Laodicea is in love with the world and its riches. Her sermons tell her people how to get more of the world's goods.

(1 John 2:15-17 KJV) Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. {16} For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. {17} And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

6. (1 John 3:2-3 KJV) Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. {3} **And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.**

E. **"and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see."**

1. The third thing that Jesus told the Church of Laodicea to buy was eye salve to anoint their eyes. Actually, the Greek word translated "anoint" actually means "rub in". So this is something they will have to work at. But what is the eye salve?

2. In the Old Testament times, people would work at getting to know God by studying the Law of Moses. In our time, we work at getting to know God by studying the entire Bible. How does this equate with "eye salve"? The link is in the Greek word for "eye salve". **It is a diminutive form of the Greek word for a loaf of bread.** This was the name of a kind of eye salve that was actually made in Laodicea. **It came in lumps shaped like small loaves of bread.** So Jesus is telling

us to rub the Bread of Life into our eyes. Read it, study it, memorize it, and meditate on it.

3. You may have drunk from the waters of Laodicea. You may have started losing your spiritual eyesight. You may no longer be able to discern the difference between a counterfeit spirit and the real Holy Ghost. Your mind may have lost the power to think for itself, you may be just one of the blind sheep following after the blind leader. You may have been intimidated by threats of God being angry with you for questioning the all-powerful man of God. You may have been tempted to throw caution to the wind and jump into "**The River**" because of statements like "don't let the move of God pass you by", "God is doing a new thing, don't miss it". If you are a preacher you might be in the process of being tempted like Jesus was tempted. The devil took Him to a great high mountain and showed Him the kingdoms of the world and told Him if He would make a small compromise and worship Satan just once He would give Him these kingdoms. Is that what is happening to you? You are hearing, "compromise, join the group and you will have a big church and lots of wealth". Jesus knew whoever you are willing to yield your will to is really the one you are worshiping. He rebuked the devil, and said "it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." If this is happening to you, you have only one way to save your soul and eye sight, "**anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.**"

4. You must go back to the Bible. Read it know it, study it, and **demand that those who want to teach you stay within its pages and Spirit.**

a. (2 Tim 4:1-5 KJV) I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead

at his appearing and his kingdom; {2} Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. {3} **For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;** {4} **And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.** {5} But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.

b. (1 Tim 4:1-2 KJV) Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times **some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;** {2} Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;

IX. THE WARNING - 19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

A. Jesus loves both Philadelphia and Laodicea. He loves Philadelphia because of who and what she stands for. Jesus loves Laodicea in spite of who and what she is.

B. "I rebuke"

1. **rebuke** "...to find fault with, correct...to reprehend severely, chide, admonish, reprove...to call to account, to show one his fault, and demand an explanation...

2. God quite often uses preachers preaching His Word to do the rebuking.

C. "and chasten"

1. **chasten** - of those who are molding the character of others by reproof and admonition...to chasten by the affliction of

evils and calamities...of a father punishing his son...of a judge ordering one to be scourged...

2. (Luke 12:42-48 KJV) And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season? {43} Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. {44} Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath. {45} But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken; {46} The lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and **will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.** {47} **And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes.** {48} But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.

a. Notice the servant would have ruled with his master but became evil.

b. He is beaten with many stripes. He has his portion with the unbelievers. He is in the Tribulation. He will experience trials that will cause him to be purified.

c. (Mat 7:22-23 KJV) Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? {23} And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

d. Please don't miss this connection, this servant is connected with the Charismatic gifts.

3. (Rev 6:9-10 KJV) And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: {10} And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?

a. I am sorry to have to say it, but it seems to me if you won't open your eyes by reading God's Word, your eyes will be open after you have missed the Rapture.

b. It will be very easy to see that Laodicea's message is false once the Tribulation has started.

X. THE LAST ALTAR CALL BEFORE THE RAPTURE. 20 Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

A. One of the things Laodicea is telling the church is that "God is no Gentleman" so don't be surprised when He forces you to crow like a chicken, bark like a dog, or moo like a cow. The only time God ever made a man act like an animal was when He judged Nebuchadnezzar for his pride. **It was punishment**, not blessing to be like an animal. In light of this, the words of Rev 3:20 KJV take on new meaning, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come into him, and will sup with him, and he with me." He is a gentleman, after all, He is seen gently knocking, and waiting for the obedient to open the door. So gentle you have to turn down the volume of the music and hear with the ear of the Spirit.

B. God will never force you to open up. The devil is the one who cast men to the ground and takes their minds from them. It is Jesus who gives them back their minds and allows them to make a choice to follow Him.

C. I think it is quite telling that Jesus did not say if any church hear my voice, or if any pastor hear my voice, but it is "if any man hear my voice". The Laodicean church will not repent, neither will the ministry of that church. Only a few wise individuals will open that door.

XI. THE PROMISE TO THE OVERCOMER - 21 To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

A. To overcome implies a struggle. Most of our struggles come from battling the temptations the devil stirs up within our own hearts. Satan and his "angels of light" have tempted this church into thinking that they by "wisely comprising" can build a great Kingdom for God. They were led to believe that the "Kingdom of God" was gaining by this effort. The kingdom they were building was not the Kingdom of God but it was the kingdom of the Antichrist.

1. (2 Th 2:8-9 KJV) And then shall that Wicked (*the Antichrist*) be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: {9} Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan **with all power and signs and lying wonders,**

2. (Rev 13:11-14 KJV) And I beheld another beast (*false prophet*) coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. {12} And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the

earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. {13} And **he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men,** {14} And **deceiveth them** that dwell on the earth by the means of **those miracles** which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.

a. Benny Hinn said this year (1998) God is going to cause fire to fall on the earth.

b. When the fire does fall, people will think it will come from God and be deceived and follow the false prophet in taking the Mark of the Beast. Thus, damning their soul to hell.

B. Building your personal Kingdom (Sowing your seed, better make sure it is good ground, the local church doesn't bring the best return) by helping the preacher to build his kingdom is the main message of Laodicea. Jesus is telling this church if you can forgo your kingdom and do my will, "I will give you a kingdom."

1. (Mat 6:31-33 KJV) Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? {32} (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. {33} But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

2. Do God's will as Philadelphia did and you will experience what Jesus promised her. (Rev 3:10-12 KJV) Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. {11} Behold, I come

quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. {12} Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.

Con. A plea from the heart of Jesus Christ to you - 22 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

A. The word spirit is probably one of the most abused words in the world of religion today. Every thing is spirit this and spirit that. (1 John 4:1 KJV) Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

B. Any spirit that adds to God's word is not His Spirit. Any Spirit that is not 100% true all the time is not His spirit. Any spirit that conflicts with God's Word is not God's spirit.

C. His Spirit is still the still quite voice only heard by the pure in heart - (Mat 5:8 KJV) Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Personal note. It is my prayer that you take the message to the Laodiceans very seriously. It is not a "joke," it is the most serious evidence we have that we are close to the time of the rapture of the church.

I make no claim of originality. I have searched everywhere I could to uncover the facts concerning Laodicea the city and Laodicea the church. I am greatly in indebted to many others for their research and work. It is my hope you will have a

greater understanding of the Word of God and will share this vital message with all you love and know.

(Rom 3:3-4 KJV) For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? {4} God forbid: yea, **let God be true, but every man a liar;** as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.

